

Reflecting on The Advent O Antiphons

The O Antiphons are Messianic promises proclaimed by the ancient prophets of Israel. They were applied to Jesus by the early Christian community and by the Church today. They stress the hope of the Savior's coming. The images are used throughout Advent but the O Antiphon prayers are used Dec. 17-23 at the gospel Alleluia at Mass and during the evening Liturgy of the Hours, before and after the Magnificat.

The sequence progresses historically from before creation to the very gates of Bethlehem. Each one begins by calling on the expected Messiah, and praises him under one of his titles. Each ends with a petition for God's people, relevant to the title by which he is addressed, and the cry for him to come. As we reflect on God's presence through the ages, we can become more aware of God's presence and saving action in our lives.

December 17



O Wisdom (O Sapientia)

O wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love;
Come to teach us the path of knowledge!

Scriptural Texts: Proverbs 9:1-6, Sirach 24:3, Wisdom 8:1, John 1:1-5

Symbols: Oil lamp, Open scroll,

O wisdom, guide our decisions on our way to you.

How have you experienced God's Wisdom guiding you?

December 18



O Leader of the House of Israel (O Adonai)

O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai;
Come to rescue us with your mighty power.

Scriptural texts: Isaiah 33:22, Acts 7:30-31

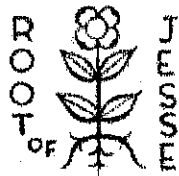
Symbols: Burning Bush, Stone tablets

O Lord, fulfill our deepest longings.

From what does the world need to be rescued at this time?

How will you make this part of your Advent longing and prayer?

December 19



O Root of Jesse's Stem (O Radix Jesse)

O Root of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all people;
Come to save us without delay.

Scriptural Texts: Isaiah 11:10, Is. 45:14, Romans 15:12

Symbols: vine or plant with flower, (especially a rose)

O Flower of Jesse's stem, help us to grow hope.

What signs of hope have you noticed recently?

December 20



O Key of David (O Clavis David)

Key of David, opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom;
Come and free the prisoners of darkness!

Scriptural texts: Isaiah 9:7, Matthew 4:16

Symbols: key, broken chain

O Key of David, open the doors that confine us.

What doors has the Lord opened for you?

What doors need to be unlocked or opened in your heart?

O Radiant Dawn (O Oriens)

O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice:

Come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Scriptural texts: Isaiah 58:8, Is. 60:18-20

Symbols: Rising sun

O Radiant dawn, break through our darkness!

What darkness have you experienced in your life or in the lives of your family or faith community?

How have you seen glimmers of God's light breaking through the darkness?

O King of the Nations (O Rex Gentium)

O King of all nations and keystone of the Church:

Come and save humanity, whom you formed from the dust.

Scriptural texts: Psalm 47:8, Jeremiah 10:7, Is:2:4

Symbols: Crown, Scepter

O King of all nations, help us create a new world of peace.

List some of the nations who are in special need in the world today, and remember them in your prayer.

O Emmanuel (O Emmanuel)

O Emmanuel, King and Giver of Law;

Come to save us, Lord our God!

Scriptural Texts: Matthew 1:23, 1 Tim. 4:9

Symbols: Manger, Chalice and Host

O Emmanuel, walk us into the future.

Light a candle and spend time in silence before Emmanuel, God with us.

December 21



December 22



December 23

